

Stabenow	Thomas	Warner
Stevens	Thune	Wyden
Sununu	Vitter	
Talent	Voinovich	

The conference report was agreed to. Mr. COCHRAN. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. LOTT. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

CORRECTING THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 1268

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 31, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1268.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) was agreed to, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 31

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That in the enrollment of H.R. 1268, an Act making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, the Clerk of the House of Representatives is hereby authorized and directed to correct section 502 of title V of division B so that clause (ii) of section 106(d)(2)(B) of the American Competitiveness in the Twenty-first Century Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-313; 8 U.S.C. 1153 note), as amended by such section 502, reads as follows:

“(ii) MAXIMUM.—The total number of visas made available under paragraph (1) from unused visas from the fiscal years 2001 through 2004 may not exceed 50,000.”.

TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the pending business.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Inhofe amendment No. 605, to provide a complete substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SARBANES. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. SHELBY. I yield to my colleague from Maryland.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to follow the Senator from Alabama, after he completes his statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise tonight to speak in support of the Federal Public Transportation Act of 2005. We know it as the Transportation bill. This bill was marked up in the committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs on March 17 and reported out with a unanimous vote.

I am proud of this legislation which was crafted on a bipartisan basis with cooperation from the distinguished Senator from Maryland, Mr. SARBANES, the committee's ranking member and former chairman.

The Federal Public Transportation Act of 2005 provides record growth for public transportation. The funding authorized in this bill will provide for significant improvements to and expansion of the Nation's transportation infrastructure. I am pleased to be working with my colleagues, Chairman INHOFE from the Environment and Public Works Committee, and Chairman STEVENS from the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

I want to thank my friends from the Finance Committee, Senators GRASSLEY and BAUCUS, for working so diligently to identify additional money for public transportation. Thanks to their efforts the Banking Committee's transit title provides record growth for transportation, \$53.8 billion over this is an increase in the share of transit funding over TEA-21 and I am confident that this money will be helpful in meeting surface transportation needs across the country.

Public transportation services are often the only form of transportation available to many citizens. These services provide mobility to the millions of Americans who cannot, for various reasons, use an automobile. More than 80 million Americans cannot drive or do not have access to a car.

Further, senior citizens are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. Many of them require access to public transportation in order to maintain their independence and to access vital healthcare services.

Today, the American public transportation industry consists of nearly 6,000 transit systems in both urban and rural areas. These transportation agencies operate a diverse array of vehicles, including subways, buses, light rail, commuter railroads, ferries, vans, cable cars, aerial tramways, and taxis.

According to the Texas Transportation Institute's 2005 Urban Mobility Report, congestion costs over \$63 billion, more than 3.7 billion hours of delay and 2.3 billion gallons of excess fuel annually. The average driver loses more than a week of work each year sitting in gridlock. The same report finds that without public transportation, there would be 1 billion more hours of delay. The report also finds that public transportation reduces the cost of congestion by about \$20 billion per year.

Public transportation investments help create employment and sustain

economic health. The Department of Transportation has estimated that for every \$1 billion in Federal highway and transit investment, 47,500 jobs are created or sustained.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, TEA-21, expired on September 30, 2003, and has temporarily been extended through May 31, 2005. The delay in providing a long-term authorization has had a significant impact on State and local governments which have been unable to develop long-term programs for funding. Public transportation represents an important part of the Nation's transportation infrastructure, which by its nature, requires long-term planning and project development. Delays in funding have resulted in project delays which ultimately increase costs and postpone the benefits which projects are designed to produce. The impact is particularly significant in States with short construction seasons since planning must be done well in advance of contracting for construction. Therefore, the committee has responded and taken action to reauthorize the public transportation title of TEA-21 in order to continue the Federal Government's critical role in public transit programs.

This bill accomplishes three important policy goals. It creates funding flexibility, increases accountability, and improves the performance and efficiency of the transit programs in the United States.

The bill creates several new formulas to better address growing transit needs. A “rural low density” formula is created to allow for transit services in sparsely populated areas where employment centers and health care are great distances apart. A “growing states” formula is created to allow communities with populations projected to grow significantly in the coming years to put in place needed transportation infrastructure. A “transit intensive cities” formula is created to address the needs of small communities where the level of transit service exceeds what their population-based formula would provide for. Finally, our bill also creates a “high density” formula to provide additional funding for States with transit needs that are particularly great because they have transit systems in extremely urban areas with high utilization rates.

The bill increases the accountability within the transit program. It rewards transit agencies which deliver projects that are on time, on budget, and provide the benefits that they promised. Further, this bill allows communities to consider more cost-effective, flexible solutions to their transportation needs by opening up eligibility within the New Starts program to non-fixed guideway projects seeking less than \$75 million in New Starts funds. With this change, other solutions can be fostered, such as bus rapid transit, which is more flexible than rail at a fraction of the cost.

Finally, the bill seeks to improve the performance and efficiency of transit